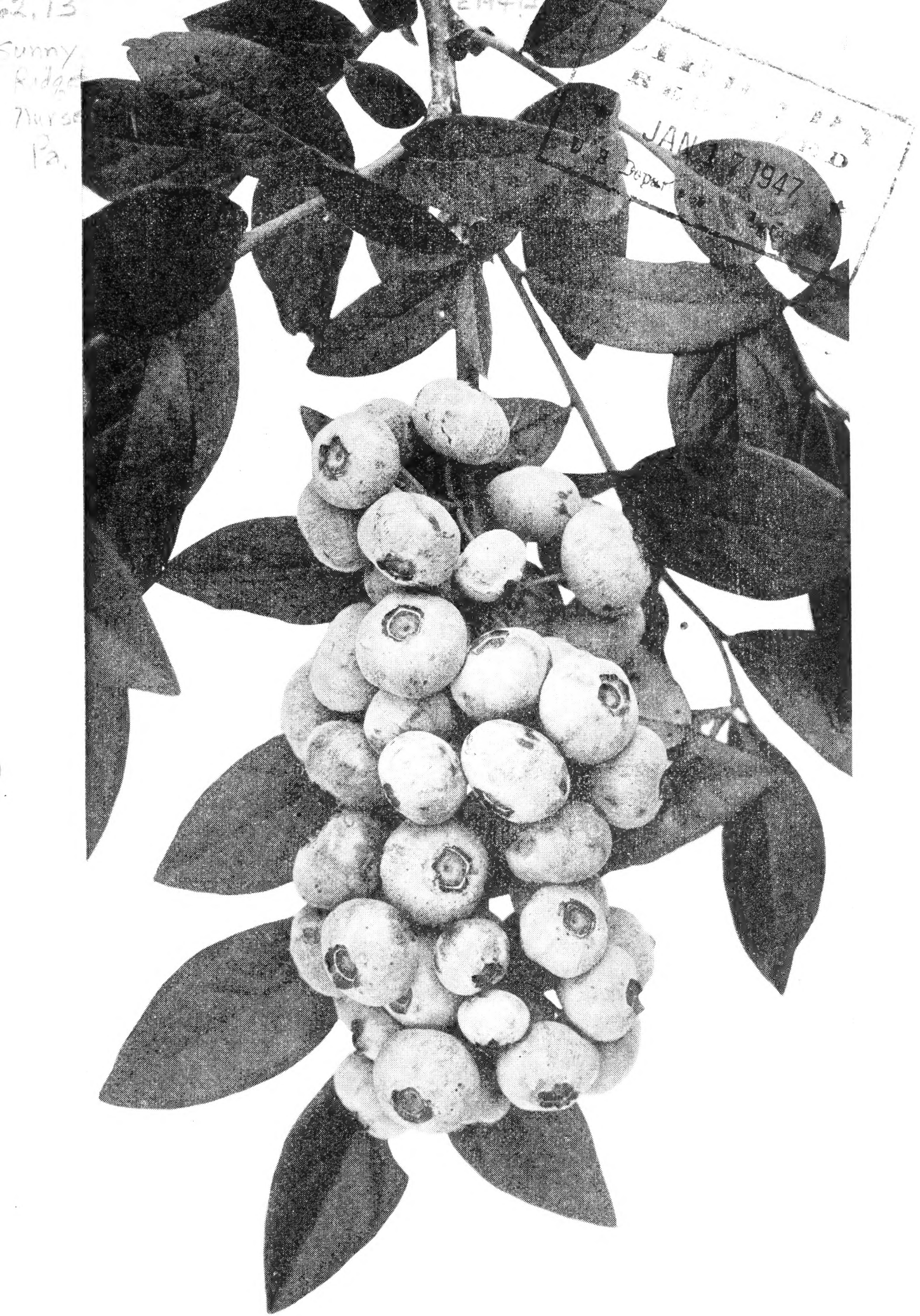


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THE HIGH BUSH BLUEBERRY

## THE HIGH BUSH BLUEBERRY

By J. RUSSELL SMITH, Sc. D.

**I**t doesn't exactly make sense, but it's real just the same. I'm talking about the fun I have picking high bush blueberries. There is no explaining it. It just is, and so we go on from there.

Perhaps it's the primeval hunting instinct. Some men get a thrill out of catching a fish, some from shooting a bird, some must stalk big game. But really now, did you ever see a blueberry bush standing up in front of you, as tall as you are or perhaps a little taller, and with great clusters of blueberries as big as small marbles, the ripe ones covered with that delicate sky blue bloom that you may have seen on some grapes? And then have you tickled those bunches with your finger tips and had these luscious morsels roll into the palm of your hand? If you haven't done that you have something coming to you.

Perhaps you are a woman. Well this fun of picking blueberries is not a merely masculine delight. My neighbor, who is a grandmother, says it is fun to pick them and she is planting a lot of bushes now that her first bushes have proved themselves.

And are the blueberries good to eat? If they were not they would not be selling at 50 to 60 cents a pint for weeks and weeks each summer.

Yet more! The bush is a first-class ornamental for your lawn. The bright new foliage of May is followed by clusters of interesting flowers and then by clusters of berries. The flowers cause the bush to appear pinkish-white for a couple of weeks. The ripening berries make a multiple appeal, esthetic, economic, gustatory and give you a sense of achievement before you touch them. In autumn the leaves are dark red and stay on till freezing weather. After the leaves fall the bark on the new growth is rich dark red until covered by the new foliage—a 12-month beauty. Is there any other ornamental that is a real ornament and also a heavy producer of delicious food?

Trout fishing costs money. Gunning costs money, so do most sports, but a blueberry bush soon pays for itself and then does it over and over again. They live on as apple trees live on, and keep sending up fresh shoots.

They are very regular bearers. The terrible and untimely heats of March and the freezes of April and May 1945 wiped out my apples, peaches, grapes and cherries, but the blueberries 100 yards away seemed never to hear about these troubles.

Here's the story.

As you perhaps know, there is a small seedy low bush huckleberry (15-18 inches high) that grows on the Appalachian mountains from New York to Georgia. This is quite different from the large meaty high bush blueberry (bush 4-7 feet high) which grows wild in moist lands near the Atlantic. In its wild form this high bush berry has become the basis of a rather important canning industry in Maine, with a scattering market production down to Carolina. The New Jersey crop of 1946 was worth 3 million dollars.

The late Frederick V. Coville, a botanist in the Department of Agriculture, was blessed with constructive imagination. He distributed pieces of metal with holes of varying sizes to pickers of wild blueberries in the Atlantic Coast Plain and offered to pay a good price for any bush that produced berries that would not go through certain holes in the metal. By this means, he gathered a garden of the choicest high bush blueberry bushes. These were the genius plants selected from many millions of wild ones. Some of these selected plants became the parents of varieties now in cultivation. Others were crossed to produce better blueberries than the wild ones.

It is these improved high bush blueberry bushes that we are offering for sale.

At first it was thought that since the blueberries came from low land near swamps, they would not grow on good upland, but such is not the case. These berries are now growing in hundreds of places between Canada and Cotton Belt, Wisconsin and the Atlantic Ocean. You can mulch the bushes and they will do well in almost any old corner.

If you buy from us, we will furnish free a leaflet that tells how to plant the bushes and how to care for them. You can put them five feet apart in rows eight feet apart. You need two varieties for pollination.

If you are absolutely squeezed for room, you can put two plants two feet apart and let them grow as one bush, but almost any family will enjoy a dozen or two dozen or three dozen of these delightful bushes. If they should in time make more berries than you can eat in summer, they are excellent canned and there is your private quick freeze locker. You will soon have one. Lockers are sweeping the country like a new style in hair-do. If you should happen to have a few more berries than you want, you can easily sell them on the bush to your neighbors' youngsters, who will gladly take them on a basis remunerative to both parties.

See our price list for plants.

Free leaflet on planting and care with each order.

Address all communications:

**SUNNY RIDGE NURSERY      —      SWARTHMORE, PA.**

